

Swami

Ashokanandaji Maharaj

His

Divine

Message



Compiled from His Letters  
by

Manmohan Dhar



*Swami Ashokanandaji Maharaj*  
*His*  
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INDIGO  
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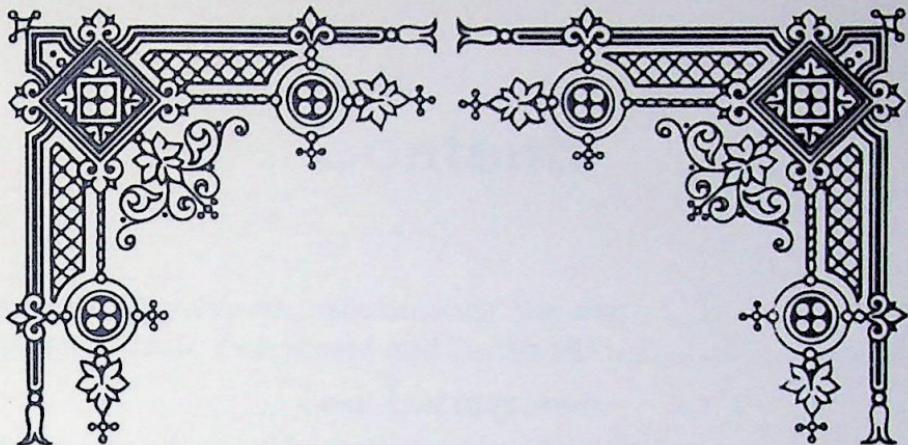
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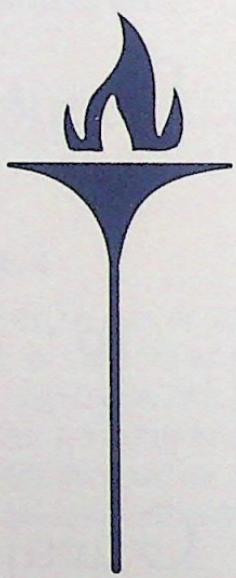


With my Deepest Homage

to

Guruji

Sri Ashokanandaji Maharaj



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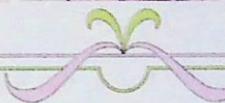
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ॐ नमः ! नवरित्रि शिवी - नमः शिवारथेत  
ॐ श्रीकृष्ण ! रामकृष्णशिविनग्न देव  
ॐ हृष्णरथ



Vivekananda Kendra

Sri Ramakrishna Mahasammelan Ashram

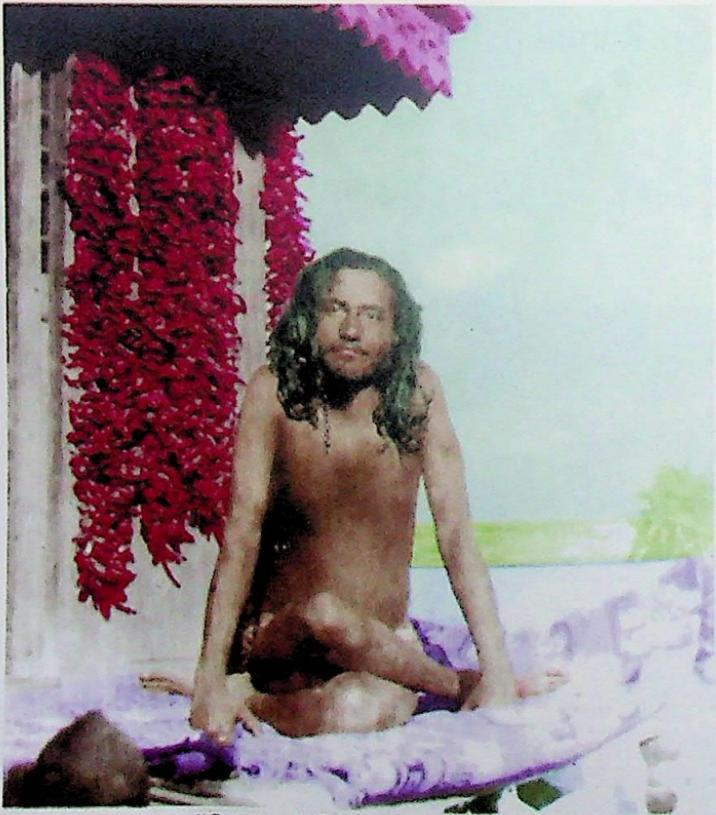


Vivekanand Kendra, Naganandi, Achchabal, Anantnag, Kashmir, India

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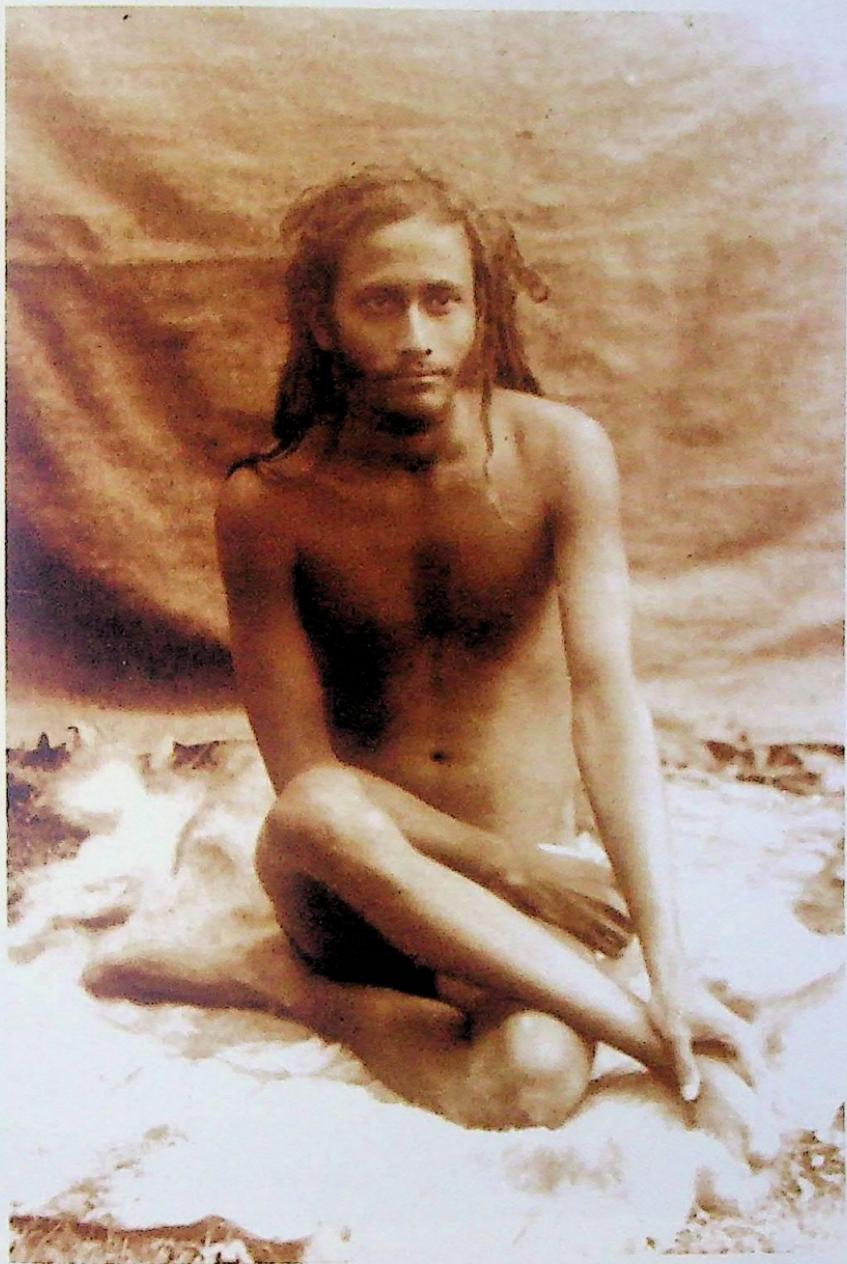


Guru Maharaj Sachidanandaji



"Spiritual Ecstasy" (ananda)

Swami Ashokanandaji Maharaj, soon after his arrival in Kashmir



*Swami Ashokanandaji Maharaj, during his early years in Kashmir*



# Facimile of Letters written to me by Swami Ashokanandaji Maharaj

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MAHASAMMELAN.  
NAGHDANDI  
P. O. ACHHABAL  
RAJASTHAN



2

NAGHDANDI  
ERINAGAR

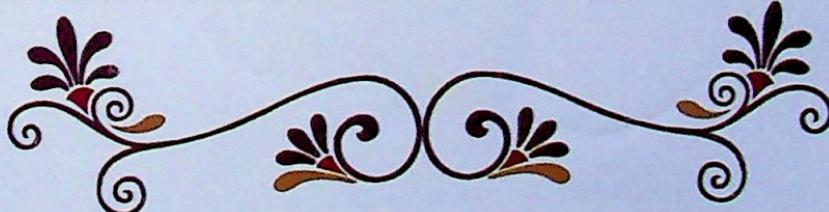
Creation come out of it, grow, develop in it due to its all pervading benevolent preserving, governing, maintaining faculty & power. Mysteriously each & every develop & progress due to its omniscient faculty & power. It is Sat Chit Ananda. All knowing, all qualities, all power is it. Sath is Brahmati. are unique cause of all cause & their effects. Each & every are the come out of it, come from it. And produce it. The tree tends to be red again. A ripple come out of the water & again tends to merge in water. If one is to put any question in these he must have to ground him with the full knowledge of effects and their causes, their relations etc and everything about them. Or if he know fully well of the effect, his question can not arise and he will believe it above.

Surface over, we human beings, we nearly are in this system or chain of creation, preservation etc one nothing but sum total of Karmas, actions & their combined fruits. Being the results or fruits of actions we naturally produce Karmas with their fruits. We do not really deserve fruits more or nothing else. (It is to be known) He is the bestower or giver of fruits of all Karmas. He bestows thro' these agencies, His creation; - may they be animate inanimate; living & non-living etc etc all. All are from His & from Him. So His functions are being performed thro' these agencies (which are <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ causes) as to their development in degrees. To bestow the particular fruit to particular action & any creature, the Divine has mysteriously connected it with particular agency or agencies. This way we can appear in to this inter-related law. Any element, object, animal, person fruits to go our actions. Solids, rations, brother, sister, parents, friends etc etc all are agencies to give fruits determined by the Divine & they also use to reap or to have fruits from us as we also are the agencies for fruits to be bestowed to them according to their Karmas. The Supreme fruit for Sath our real we, our antariksha creates some reservation in us without our knowledge is the highest Divine, to achieve Sath, to return again to that we can come out from Him. In between stages the little fruits of actions which are & seems agreeable & disagreeable, pleasing & unpleasing are all not our objects of aim. If anyone in these stages having any object of profit of his action Sath can not be object or aim, having to from any type of



agency becomes pleased, attached to it and to the agency, he is one to be entangled in to pursue his of self-karmas and if he gets disgusted to, that also becomes the cause of his permanent future too. Until anyone achieves the highest point the Divine for which he is destined, obtaining which there remains nothing to act, to respond, that is completion + perfection, having which one is merged into that, becomes Divine. The motion of life never ceases, no one can avoid this destination or can repel at all from it, conscious or unconscious; willingly or unwillingly each + every is tending towards that. If one consciously feels the route becomes mortals, short, easy, peaceful and comforting. If one unconsciously feels as the nature of a surface man like ourselves, the route becomes horrible, pathetic, full of pain, pleasure + misery, tiresome and eternally long, full of complexities and difficulties. But half each + every has to be conscious of his mission + object and has to act towards the same.

Suppose a human, who he really is? the agency to give, to labor fruits to my actions past + present. And he also to have power of his actions. Here we should know that the objects + powers connect with us seeming agreeable + pleasure giving always can not be pleasant + agreeable in his laboring fruit. They can be for misery too, appear in the form of intimate ones and being intimate cause pain + misery. That also determined by the law of Karma. If I am attached to him to his giving, felt to me blessing + do according with all my power, I create more future world misleading me from the desired aim + being slipped off from the path. If I am disgusted, vexed due to any of his giving because with I get from him are nothing but the result of my own actions, to labor to me he is mere an agency; if I am disgusted + act reciprocally; future world is made and I am entangled. They reflect, I reflect after their or mine due + determined function. None of these can be made one's own. And these can never be one's own. They are only the agencies, the instruments. Quite slave + dependent to the governing principle, the higher Divine. There is free will, sense of freedom + independence within, which only is seen the expression of real man within. In us its acts mostly like the sunbeams fully associated with these clouds. It loses its faculty, and act being the property of the associate. This happens due to the ignorance, ignorance of reality. Truth is cause. Just like the drunk man. The man is not the Toxin but becomes helpless due to complete association with the toxins who knows clearly well of the fruit giving-taking agencies, this aspect of life's function, the secret of self-relation-life; who knows that pleasure + pain are the results of one's own action distributed thro' several agencies and himself never the

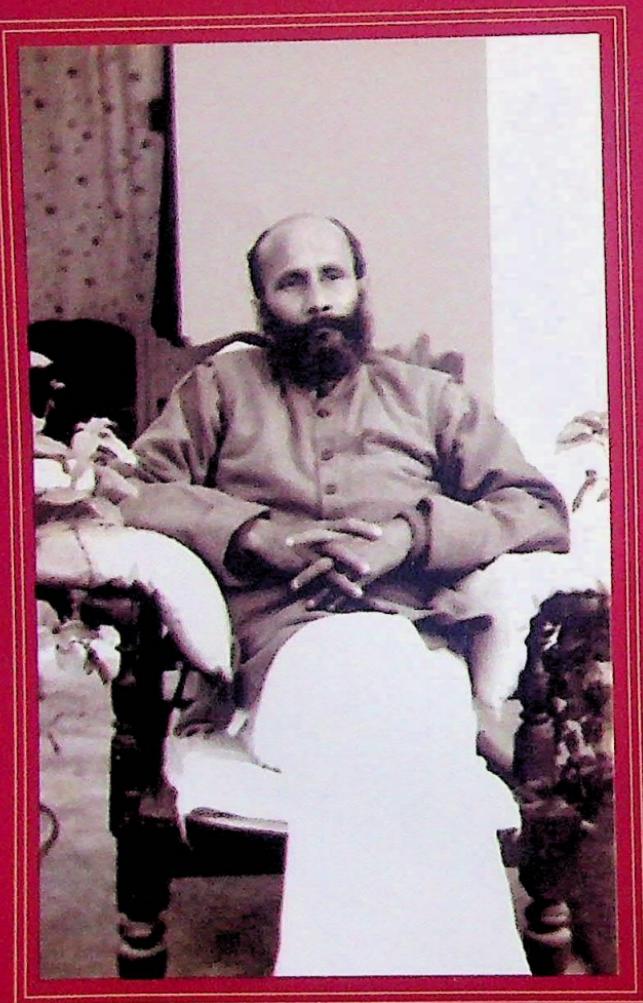




Photographed by Manmohan Dhar in Calcutta in 1965



Photographed by Manmohan Dhar in 1957



*In the house of a devotee*



guru brahma

gurur brahmaa gurur vishnuh  
gurur deva maheeshvarah  
gurur shaakshaat parabrahma  
taasmai shree guruvane namah.





### **Meaning**

*Know the Guru to be Brahma himself. He is Vishnu. He is also Shiva. Know Him to be the Supreme Brahman, and offer thy adorations unto that peerless Guru*

# Introduction

Swami Ashokanandaji Maharaj  
**Shri Ramakrishna Mahasamelan Ashram**  
*Nagadandi, Achchabal, Anantnag Tehsil, Kashmir*

In the early thirties, Kashmir was visited by a large number of well educated young sanyasins, mostly belonging to the Shri Ramakrishna Mission, from various parts of India. Local intellectuals, interacting with them, were impressed by their deep knowledge of the Vedas, Vedanta and the Gita and their spirit of renunciation. Kashmiri intellectuals, elite and the laity, had already got glimpses of the vision that Swami Vivekananda had woven for the whole world and of the panorama, depth and range of the spiritual, cultural and catholic heritage of India.

On the 11<sup>th</sup>.of September 1893, Swami Vivekananda spoke as follows at the Parliament of World's religions in Chicago, USA-

*The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita:*

*“Whosoever comes to ME, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to ME”*

*“Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this earth. They have filled this earth with violence,*

*drenched it often and often with human blood,  
destroyed civilisations and sent whole nations to  
despair..."*

(A retaste of the gruesome tragedy was experienced on the 11<sup>th</sup>.September 2001 in NEW-YORK, after 108 years. If causes persist, effects persist too)

In his concluding speech on the 27<sup>th</sup>. of September 1893 Swami Vivekananda thundered and declared as follows-

*"...if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in-spite of resistance: 'Help and not Fight', 'Assimilation and not Destruction', 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension'."*

All this and other writings of Swami Vivekananda had made deep inroads in the mental make up of the intellectuals of Kashmir and they were, therefore, always on the look out for some-one amongst the visiting monks to the state, who would disseminate, at-least to some extent, the spiritual aura, effulgence and dynamism of Swami Vivekananda's personality.

Swami Vivekananda and many others like Swami Ramtirath, had put India on the spiritual map of the world. Whereas, Hegel, Kant, Marx, Nietzsche, Berkley and many others, had stretched their intellectual prowess in an attempt to give some clue of the mystery of human behavior, existence and 'why,' 'where-to-fore' and 'where-from', there were others who stated as follows-

Said Will Durant-

*“Nothing should more deeply shame the modern student than the recency and inadequacy of his acquaintance with India.....this is the India that patient scholarship is now opening up, like a new intellectual continent, to the Western mind which only yesterday thought civilization an exclusive European thing.”*

In the words of Max Mueller, talking on the Upnishads-

*“It is surely astounding that such a system as Vedanta should have been slowly established by the indefatigable and intrepid thinkers of India thousand of years ago, a system that even now makes us feel giddy, as in mounting the last steps of the swaying spire of the ancient Gothic Cathedral”*

Schopenhauer agrees that-

*“Access to Vedas is the greatest privilege this century may claim over all previous centuries”.*

In the whole World, he adds-

*“There is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upnishads. It has been the solace of my life — it will be the solace of my death”*

And in his prelude to the biography of Shri Ramakrishna written by him, Romain Rolland, the French Nobel Laureate writes-

*“If there is one place on the face of this earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the earliest days when man began the*

*dream of existence, it is India... For more than thirty centuries the tree of Vision, with all its thousand branches and their millions of twigs, has sprung from its torrid land, the burning womb of GODS. It renews itself tirelessly, showing no signs of decay. And the substance and thought of its interlaced branches, through which the same sap runs, have been so closely knit together, that from root to the topmost twig the whole tree is vibrant, like the mast of the great ship of this Earth, and it sings one great symphony, composed of thousand voices and the thousand faiths of mankind»*

Vacillation that had set in, in the minds of Indian intellectuals with exposure to the currents of materialism, industrial revolution in the west, Marxist thinking and the effort of the Christian missionaries to denigrate Indian spiritual thinking and philosophy as primitive, archaic and superstitious; was replaced by renewed interest in perennial validity of the Indian philosophy by reading unequivocal affirmation of the greatness and uniqueness of the Indian philosophy, culture and way of life, by great thinkers like Aldous Huxley and many others, some of whom, have been quoted above. Pronouncements of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Ramtirath and others and emergence of Gandhiji, Shri Aurobindo, J. Krishnamurti, Maharishi Raman and many others and their writings made, being an Indian a matter of enlightened pride. Recent writings by great thinkers and scientists have reinforced this faith.

As recently as 1970, *Dr. Arnold Toynbee* observed, after surveying the story of the entire human race-

*“It is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a Western beginning will have to have an In-*

*dian ending if it is not to end in self-destruction of the human race."*

In the words of modern physicist, Fritz Capra-

*"Many physicists will find that eastern mysticism provides a consistent and beautiful framework, which can accommodate our most advanced theories of physical world"*

Well known astro-physicist, Carl Sagan, who, unfortunately, died about a couple of years back, observes-

*"The Hindu religion is the only one of the world's great faiths dedicated to the idea that cosmos itself undergoes an immense, indeed an infinite, number of deaths and rebirths-it is the only religion in which the time scales correspond to those of modern cosmology.....And while our intelligence has recently provided us with awesome powers, it is not yet clear that we have the wisdom to avoid our own self destruction."*

Here both Arnold Toynbee and Carl Sagan are echoing the warning given at the Parliament of religions by Swami Vivekananda, in Chicago USA, on the 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1893.

With this rather detailed background, it would perhaps be pertinent to present a pen picture of a saint who appeared to be in the most ancient mould of sanyasins, who struck one as descending straight from the heights of Himalayas, naked save a loin cloth, lost in the awareness of the innermost self, exuding in his eyes ecstasy and bliss which was totally irresistible.

Swami Vivekananda writes-

*“few understand the power of thought. If a man goes into a cave. Shuts himself in, and thinks really one great thought,..that thought will permeate the walls of that cave, vibrate through space, and at last permeate the whole human race. Such is the power of thought...”*

The thoughtful silence of this young sanyasin was eloquent, speaking and hypnotic and his smile was soothing, full of love and compassion.

He was spotted, in Kathleshwar temple, at Zaindar Mohalla, Srinagar, Kashmir. The temple had broken dome and, therefore, was open to vagaries of weather. A makeshift tent was made of bushels of grass, inside the temple, where he was found resting his head on the ‘pranali’ of, the ‘Shiva linga’, lost in deep meditation.

When disturbed by cautious and respectful intrusion, he came down to the level of normal awareness, but still the hangover of divine intoxication was apparent in his blissful smile and his eyes, both giving impression of embers of spiritual fire burning within him. He commanded awe, affection and instant devotion. The word went round and men, women and children came to bask in his celestial presence.

Meanwhile, winter started setting in, but he did not light any log fires, as was wont with ‘Naga’ sadhus, who used to visit Kashmir on their pilgrimage to the holy cave of Amarnath. He stayed on in Kashmir and started moving to the hills at short intervals, in sun-shine, rain and snow. For reasons best known to him his favourite haunt was Naran-Nag, beyond Wangat, which is situated on the road to Sonamarg. Near Wangat he made contact with a

Muslim mystic by the name of Sobur Sheikh. Between them, they used to communicate by exchanging (*naswar*) snuff powder. Being a predominantly Muslim area, he picked up a smattering of the Kashmiri language, which he spoke with a sweet Bengali accent. As time went by, he made deep inroads into the hearts of the local Muslims.

Although, at first with respectful and awesome caution, yet drawn to him by Irresistible attraction, local people of all grades, of all communities of varying intellectual attainment, men, women and children gathered round him to sit in silence in his presence, to breathe and to feel the subtle waves of peace and spiritual elation, un-aided by words, speeches or discourses; yet at times words fell softly and sweetly from his mouth. They conveyed more than their meaning. A look, a touch, a smile was enough recompense after days of waiting or miles of trekking to sit in his soul-elevating presence. Such was the power of his love.

His movements were as unpredictable as of that wind, as he moved, bare-footed, from high mountains to the far corners of the length and breadth of the valley, in sunshine, rain or snow. I have seen snow collecting on his bare shoulders. He wore no clothes, as stated earlier, but carried only two possessions: His 'Kashkole' a handy container made from the hard cover of a pumpkin, used as a begging bowl, normally carried by 'Naga' sadhus and a small bottle of snuff (*naswar*). One day when he left to go to the mountains he forgot to carry his 'Kashkol'. After traversing a short distance he suddenly found that he had no 'Kashkol' in his hand and retraced his steps to pick his major possession. Then, while crossing the nearby bridge on the river Jhelum, he could not reconcile with his attachment for his 'Kashkol' and dropped it into the river, never to carry it again.

Writes Swami Vivekananda, in his small pamphlet 'My Master'

*“...in India, even an emperor on the throne wants to trace his descent from some beggar-sage in the forest, from a man who wore the bark of a tree, lived upon the fruits of the forest and communed with GOD. That is the type of descent we want, and so long as holiness is supremely venerated, India cannot die.”*

It was not surprising, therefore, that doors were flung wide open for him and with open hearts, he was sought for and received in every home. Considering what Swami Vivekananda has said, it appeared as if he had come to Kashmir straight from the Vedic Age.

Such was Swami Ashokanandaji Maharaj for about twelve or thirteen years. During these years of silent communication, he gave stray hints of his mission and his, childlike, unconditional and complete devotion to Shri Ramakrishna Parmahansa. These were the years during which he prepared the ground in Kashmir in which to plant the seed of the deepest, subtlest and pristine message of Shri Ramakrishna and the ideal of **Divine Motherhood**. Pictures of Shri Ramakrishna, Ma Sharada and Swami Vivekananda found their place, for daily worship, in the shrines in the homes of the devotees of Swami Ashkonanda Ji. In small gatherings, particularly of youngsters, English version of the Gospel of Shri Ramakrishna was read. I, along with other young boys, to name a few: Manakakji Tarozdar, Trilokinathji Tarozdar and others, used to go into raptures of Divine fervour while reading the gospel. We would feel we were part of the crowd at Dakhineshwar and felt recreation of the same atmosphere in Swamijis presence, after a span of nearly 80 years.

Devotional and classical, vocal and instrumental music, was played in his presence. I still remember the classical songs sung by Babaji Rao, in ragas:

‘*Bihag*’, ‘*Kidar*’, ‘*Shankara*’, ‘*Malhar*’, ‘*Bhairao*’, ‘*Kamod*’ etc. Shri. Jialal Kharoo’s Dilruba and Sitar playing became a daily feature and so did of my uncle, Vidhlalji Dhar and of Swaroop nath ji Tarozdar’s, with tabla accompaniment by Harinath ji Tarozdar. Professor Kanjilal of Sri Pratap college, used to play Sitar in masterly depth and range. One got surcharged with divine fervour and lost in its ecstasy. One lost the count of people who got the privilege of sitting in his silent, smiling and spiritual presence. No discussions appeared appropriate. All that one needed was to be in tune, mind, heart and soul.

Looking back, I now feel, that Divine Shakhti, in her own mysterious way was working on Her own plans. Shri Harinath Tarozdar, an unflinching devotee of Swamiji, traveled all over the valley, to locate a place where a thatched mud hut could be built for a brief sojourn and rest for Swamiji Maharaj. In the lap of the mountains, amidst dense forests, with a small perennial fresh water spring tucked in, in an obscure corner; a place was found at Nagadandi, near Achchabal Mogul gardens and acquired a most beautiful mud hut with thatched roof and an ‘L’ shaped narrow verandah on the east and south side, was built.

I have seen about a 12 ft. long snake, with skin of a beautiful pattern resting full length on the eastern side of the verandah. Seeing me it crawled into the gap in the mud plaster of the 2 ft. high railing. I never saw it again and took no notice of it. Swamiji Maharaj used to sit in the south-west corner of the same verandah. Right in front of him, on the front wall, was a foot long and beautiful likeness of Jesus Christ on the cross, in three dimensions. Devotees, of all communities, rich and poor, used to sit in

front of Swamiji, on the south side verandah. It was not unusual to see Swamiji, playing sitar, sitting in the south-west corner of the verandah His sitar playing, in classical ragas, transported the spiritual ambience of the forest surroundings to a higher plane of awareness of peace and fullness.

Discharge from the perennial spring, miraculously increased. On the down stream side two ponds, on two different levels, were built by devotees, with three picturesque water falls, delivering water from the upper pond to the lower one. Flowers were planted. A small temple was built, with likeness of Shri Ramakrishna, Sharda Ma and Swami Vivekananda placed on the shrine. Swamiji Maharaj used to sit, in the open air, reclining on a stone sleeper which was supported on a pine tree. Visitors to Swamiji, in the salubrious and forest surroundings, presented a setting straight from the Vedic age. Evening and morning worship was conducted in the temple. Gradually, the whole set up assumed the semblance of an ashram and Swamiji Maharaj gave it the name of:

### SHRI RAMAKRISHNA MAHASAMELAN ASHRAM.

All this was not planned, but happened by **DIVINE DISPENSATION**, a mystery that can only be explained by the following expressions of Swami Vivekananda Ji Maharaj:

Describing Kashmir, Swamiji wrote to Srimati Indumati Mitra sometime in September 1897:

*"This Kashmir is a veritable heaven on Earth. No where else in the World is such a country as this. Mountains and rivers, trees and plants, men and women, beasts and birds-all vie with one another*

*for excellence. I feel a pang at heart not to have visited it so long..."*

On the 1<sup>st</sup>.October, 1897 he wrote to Sister Nivedita:

*"I shall not try to describe Kashmir to you. Suffice it to say, I never felt sorry to leave any country except this paradise on Earth; and I am trying my best, if I can, to influence the Raja in starting a centre here. So much to do here and the material so hopeful ..."*

And again on 3<sup>rd</sup>. November, 1897 Swamiji wrote to Sister Nivedita:

*'I have been here (Jammu) for fifteen days to get some land in Kashmir from the Maharaja. I intend to go to Kashmir next summer I am here and start some work here.'*

But why was Swami Vivekanandaji Maharaj so keen to set up an ashram in Kashmir? Answer to this question is not within the capacity of a normal intellect to find. Could it be because Shri Ramakrishna said his next incarnation would be in the North-west.

Over the centuries Kashmir has been the cradle of cultures. Buddhism came here and the World got 'Mahayan' Buddhism. Kashmir Shaivism is the pinnacle of Indian philosophy discounting the belief that this world is false. Shankracharya came to Kashmir with the glow and fire of 'Aham Brahman', but latter he wrote 'Saundarya Lahiri' in praise of the Goddess Tripurasundari, and in one of the Shankracharya Ashrams the image of Goddess Shardha is being worshiped. This Murti was brought from Sharda peeth, in Kashmir, now in

Pakistan. According to extensive research carried out by German and other authors, from the Christendom itself, Jesus Christ is believed to have been in Kashmir before and after crucifixion. There is a mosque right in the heart of Srinagar, the summer capital of J&K state, where Jesus is supposed to have been buried. Sufism and Kashmiriat are an amalgam of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. Over the milleniums Kashmir is and has been special on many counts apart from its geography and unparalleled natural beauty.

Swamiji's remarks, therefore, have indeed a Divine import and cannot be considered as random or casual.

Swami Vivekananda could not visit Kashmir again and thus his wish to set up an Ashram in Kashmir, where 'he had "found", so much to do and the material so hopeful'; remained an unfulfilled dream. He had the vision of Maha Kali at Khir Bhavani, where he was inspired to write his famous poem, 'Kali the Mother'

It was at Achchabal that he 'suddenly decided to go to Amarnath' writes sister Nivedita. As he entered the cave, reports Sister Nivedita, it seemed to him as if he saw Shiva made visible before him. He said afterwards to sister Nivedita that in the brief moments he had received from Shiva the gift of *Amar*-not to die until he himself had willed it. His dream, however, though unfulfilled during his lifetime, was already registered in the cosmic time to be made a reality, under a divine dictate, by a source intimately, divinely and equally connected with Shri Ramakrishna.

In the divine scheme Kashmir, it appears, has had a role to play. And to appreciate the sudden appearance of Swami Ashokananda ji in Kashmir, in the above

context, the following spiritual link and mystery appears relevant and self - explanatory -

Swami Ashokananda ji was the disciple of Swami Satchitananda ji Maharaj from East Bengal, who was initiated and given sanyas by Holy Mother, Ma Sharda. Their commitment to Shri Ramakrishna ideology was total. They operated outside Shri Ramakrishna Mission organization, as do many others. The emphasis, however, has been on **man building and the propagation of Divine Motherhood**. Cosmic forces got to work to fulfill the celestial dream of Swami Vivekanandaji.

He, Swami Ashokananda ji, was also from East Bengal, and was born in a Mukherji family, on Friday, the 10th of February, 1911. His premonistic name was Deenabandhu Mukherji. His school mate, Shri Chandi Prashad Mukherji, an eminent Chartered Accountant and for several years **President of the Institution of Chartered Accountants, India**; who has unfortunately passed away some years back, became my mentor, guide and a great friend. I was commended to him by Swamiji Maharaj, to be my guardian, on my shifting to Calcutta, to pursue my career with M/s Braithwaite & Co. He put me up for a month or so, until he found a flat for me next to his three storey house. My credentials were totally acceptable because I was recommended by Swamiji Maharaj. I came to know of the high regard and affectionate reverence he and his wife Smt. Chaya Devi had for Swamiji Maharaj, during my seventeen years service with M/s Braithwaite & Co.

Mr. C.P.Mukherjee, particularly referred to his childhood and stated that right from his birth Deenabandhu gave the impression of being an outsider, very intelligent but lost in a world of his own. Naturally, his brother was totally disgusted with him and did not spare the rod and at

the age of 8 (eight years) he sought shelter in the ashram of Swami Satchitananda ji Maharaj, who, as mentioned earlier, was an initiated disciple of the Holy Mother, Sharda Ma, spiritual consort of Shri Ramakrishna. He had to undergo severe regimen of spiritual discipline, which he did with utmost dedication and total surrender to Lord Shri Ramakrisna and Ma Sharda. During, his stay at the Ashram, he was given sanyas and the monastic name of Swami Ashokananda.

His Guru Maharaj held him in very high regard and made no secret of the heights of spiritual excellence he had achieved. Swamiji Maharaj knew of absolutely no compromises in the spiritual path. One had to be perfect in his resolve, in his pursuit and in sadhana. One had to, he would say, combine the qualities of a prince and a *sadhak* of total surrender to his Ishta. He was at the ashram, from what we have been able to gather from stray hints thrown by him, during conversations; for about eight or ten years, with his Guru Maharaj. Later, he was sent by Guru Maharaj to Uttar Kashi for further sadhna. During his travels in the Himalayas, his body, mind, heart and Atma were tuned to a very high degree of spiritual fervour and he was allotted a hut near Gita Ashram, next to Swami Shivananda ji Maharaj, who later on founded the 'Divine Life Society'. Ashokanandaji settled to a strict regimen of meditation and established continued presence of Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Ma Kali in him. He had visions and many experiences of conversation with Shri Thakur (Shri Ramakrishna). Some of these, recounted by him to me, are of deep Spiritual and Universal import.

His Guru Maharaj, however, had plans for him. When he attained the age of twenty two or twenty three, he was ordered by his Guru Maharaj to go to Kashmir, shed his clothes, live there braving sunshine, rain and

snow, without any external aid, or use of any of his Yogic powers to face the vagaries of weather and establish the presence of Shri Ramaakrishna, Sharda Ma and Swami Vivekananda and their pristine message, in Kashmir more by example than discourse. His primary emphasis was on '*Divine Motherhood*'. This we came to know, gradually, in the fifties.

He landed in Kashmir in 1933 or 1934. He was spotted in Kathleshwar Mandir in early 1933 or 1934 and straight away found his way into the hearts of young and old ,men and women and was, looked after well, as it were, like a child. His mere presence was peace, joy and unalloyed love. Words would limit the impact of his almost divine presence. The impact of beauty is instant, as that of the smile of a child, of a beautiful scenery or of a sunset or even of a beautiful face. How much more then of a person whose presence reflects God within. Are words necessary? Isn't feeling enough. Such was Swamiji Maharaj, when he descended on Kashmir, as if from above.

He did not lay his hands on books yet the depth of his knowledge of Vedas, shastaras etc., about which he spoke rarely, was uncanny. His whole personality was, as it were, wrapped in mystery.

Excerpts from some of his letters are presented for the benefit of humanity to establish a sense of direction, a sense of divine purpose of creation itself, torn as it is, between the ephemeral and sensuous pursuits of present day living...

His letters are unique in their format. Firstly, he had no formal education worth the name. Secondly, in his peregrinations, he never got time to settle down for any serious reading. He was always on the move. Yet, the

quality of his hand writing, the words he used , the construction of his sentences and the steadiness of his hand writing, even in a twelve page letter; hits one as an overwhelming evidence of a super-mind: steady, clear and having his vision, in a time-frame that is 'timeless'. A facsimile of a couple of pages of one of his eight page letters, to me, is enclosed and illustrates the above observations.

His love had and, I am fully aware now, a perennial quality. His life, his sojourn in Kashmir, where he attained Mahasamadhi on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 1971; and even the establishment of an ashram at Nagadandi, is a mystery. During the turmoil of the last thirteen years the ashram has been visited and revered by Muslims, in large numbers. There is ample evidence at Nagadandi that there are no dividing lines between various religions and that all hands stretch themselves in prayer to the ONE AND ONLY ALMIGHTY, in DIVINE and sincere human love and aspiration.

The following dream of Swami Vivekananda, who was an integral part of the combined personalities of Shri Ramakrishna and Ma Sharda, that vibrated through every nerve and heart beat of our Swami Ashokananda ji Maharaj and in whose name he established the Ashram-

**SHRI RAMAKRISHNA MAHASAMELAN ASHRAM** was being divinely ordained to be fulfilled. Is Nagadandi **Ashram** going to grow mysteriously enough, in Kashmir, where the prophetic words and the following dream of Swami Vivekananda are going to blossom into reality ?-

*"We want to lead mankind to the place where there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran, yet this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran."*

*Mankind ought to be taught that religions are but the varied expressions of THE RELIGION, which is Oneness, so that each may choose the path that suits him best.*

Kashmir's geography, its place in the cultural mosaic of India, the relevance of the Indian values in the survival of the human race, the emergence of religious fanaticism, in pushing the world civilisations to rid the world, by their joint will, of the conflict slammed on humanity in the name of God and the clarion call of Swami Vivekananda on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1893 at the parliament of religions held in Chicago USA, all these, lead us to see a Divine Hand in the shape of things to come.

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਜਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਡੇ  
ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਡੇ  
ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

11th May, 2002

Manmohan Dhar  
C-56, Kailash Apartments  
Lala Lajpat Rai Marg  
New Delhi-110048  
India

e-mail: [manmohan\\_dhar@vsnl.net](mailto:manmohan_dhar@vsnl.net)  
Telephone: 91-11-6471696



## Preface

### Man, environment and Divine Life (From Swamijee's Letter)

Man stands at the centre of this diversified world. He finds himself surrounded by various phenomena, which produce different kinds of agreeable and disagreeable impressions upon him. He comes in contact with innumerable species of objects: living, non-living, sentient, insentient, speaking, speechless, big, small etc. His happiness and misery are influenced by his experience in his relationship with these objects and phenomena. Every object has its features and character distinctly different from others. Whereas, on some he may or can exercise control but a vast majority are beyond his reach or control.

He is at the receiving end of the agreeable and disagreeable reactions of the world around, but how he reacts to the world around is well within his power and depends on the level of emancipation of his personality.

Emancipation of one's personality is a result of experiencing futility of the mad chase involved in the pursuit of desires, one after the other, with no end in sight. An analytical mind sees through the plurality involved in this pursuit of sensuous desires. In the course of plural aspect of inter-play of subject and object relationship, he perceives a basic unity, behind and within the plurality of sensuous relationship. This realization unfolds a harmony as a by product of the innermost response to all external stimuli and he becomes conscious of an all pervading Divinity that forms the substratum of all creation and its inter play.

But ways of flesh are slippery indeed. May be Divinity has so designed the path of ascent, with pit falls all along the way, to make sure that an aspirant goes through all of them unscathed, unhindered and unfazed. An aspirant's pursuit, purpose and endeavor have to be pure all the way. There are no compromises on the way to HIM This is the Divine Law.

Lower self, like gravity, is always trying to pull him down and to make an aspirant lose his sense of direction in the phenomenal world. The higher he goes the greater is his danger to be deluded by objectives that appear to be in line with his ideal, but in effect are snares to delude him away and pull him down. If he becomes a victim then his life becomes a battle field of various mutually conflicting ideas, ideals and principles which in their train bring him pain, disquietude and dissatisfaction

Man can get rid of such a possibility and discordant feelings, if and when all such conflicting feelings are tested on the touchstone of pure, selfless and UNIVERSAL LOVE. He must, like a shrewd money changer rejecting each counterfeit coin, be wary of and reject every stimuli, every impulse, every thought that conflicts with his ideal and supreme goal. One false foothold on the steep slope of ascent to the glowing peak of His Presence and His universal Love brings him hurling down to where he began from. But with the development and expansion of the feeling of LOVE in his heart, the feelings of hatred, aversion, antipathy, treachery, falsehood, lying, deceit, selfishness, cunningness, hypocrisy, suspicion, lust, anger, vanity and double dealings etc.; all of which are sources of discord, hostility, sorrow and misery, gradually disappear giving place to noble feelings of benevolence, charity, reverence, sympathy, truthfulness, sacrifice, restraint and sweetness, that glow and emanate from his emancipated personality. He lands, secure, in the lap of His Universal Love.





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Letters

ॐ नमः ! नमस्तु शिवां - नमः शिवाय  
ॐ शिवाय ! शिवां नमः शिवाय  
ॐ शिवाय

## Motherhood the highest expression of the Divine

14 August, 1955

**T**his world as we see it in various forms of life:— inanimate, vegetable, animal, and human, continue on the male and female principles, is created by interaction between these two major expressions of Divinity and sustained by the 'Mother' instinct, and so many others, known and unknown to man.

Shiva, as the primordial being, Shakti and Her Maya, are the trinity that forms the tripod on which the entire creation functions, creates and sustains. Death indeed, in itself, is an essential form of creation.

But, behind all this, the Sat-Chit-Anand aspect of the Supreme Being expresses itself, in the relationship between these two viz. Shiva and Shakhti.....

In the vegetable and animal world, the object is basically to continue the species and in the process to manifest the wonder,

the beauty, the immense variety and panorama of creation. At the human level, the relationship is dynamic giving man and woman the freedom and the power to lend growth, lustre and divine grace and raise it to the same level as the source of all creation.

Male and female relationship, therefore, has a Divine purpose. May the Providence be kind enough to remove all barriers, in all human relationships of people, as man and wife, to lead a peaceful and harmonious life, to grow into an enlightened life, passing on to their off-springs the highest ideals of Divine purpose. Wife and husband should worship each other to make them a complete whole. In each and every action and feeling, discipline, regulations etc are absolutely necessary to make relationships grow and unfold. Love, fidelity, mutual trust, respect and dependence are the living components on which relationship grows and reveals, its depth and ultimate objective of relationship between Shiva and Shakti; which are the symbols of absolute Love, absolute Existence and absolute Conscious Force.

Through sincere and prayerful dedication to each other, the inner 'self' is revealed, in its fullness, as the Supreme Love and Conscious Force. **Such a home is the highest temple of gods** and the basic unit of a society that becomes the breeding and training

ground for future generations to grow into an enlightened nationhood. **Motherhood is the highest level of a woman's personality.** Where woman are respected, that nation can never die or degenerate.



## From pure Bhav to Maha Bhav

27 August 1955

Pure Bhav is the external expression of the self, within the real person, the existence and feeling consciousness. If this *Bhav* is not well guarded, protected and preserved from the influence of *antahkaran* and the response of the sense organs to outer stimuli, then *Budhi* is accordingly influenced and the ego of the person – even of a pure devotee – gets confused in the pursuit of the objects of desire, through the sense organs, and strays away from the path of enlightenment, the path of Truth which is pure knowledge, existence, feeling consciousness, as the goal of man in this life.

When this happens, then '*Bhavrupi*' existence and feeling conscious takes the shape of diverse desires and gets entangled in complex whirlpools and is compelled to express itself in forms and shapes of such influences and in the long run becomes impure, dark and ignorant and falls from the state of pure existence, bliss, consciousness. One becomes like a tiger that eats grass amongst the flock of sheep, having completely forgotten his real form, nature and power, by

growing amongst sheep, from his birth.

To save one-self and to protect one-self from such diverse influences and from taking temporal shapes and to guard one-self from the inherent results, such as misery and happiness, pleasure and pain, belief and disbelief, malice and avarice, greed and jealousy, one has to enlighten one-self with an ideal that is not in the least different from the '*Bhavarupa Sattva*'.

The dormant, inherent '*samskars*' in the '*antahkaran*', apart from those coming from reaction of the senses to the stimuli from the objects of senses and '*vrittisth*' they create, tend to give complex shape to the real person and his '*Bhav*'. Present day, false idealism, is the most complex trap in which an aspirant gets entangled and in the end creates disharmony, disturbance, imbalance, misery, pain and frustration, in inter-related life.

A person possessing pure '*Bhav*' should not let his 'self' be a victim of stimuli from within or outside, and should always guard his self, aiming the real object of life and its achievement for which the Divine Being has set in motion, this creation.

There is no provision for any intellect to act in contradiction of the Divine principle and Mission. Each and every form of creation, human, animal, vegetable and in-

animate, is tending towards the Divine Being, the ultimate cause of creation. An individual pure *Bhav* is integral part of his self, which in turn is a part of the *Maha Bhav* – the Supreme Brahma, the Lord – *Sat-Chit-Anandmayee*.

The questions that arise are how to lead a life that leads to expansion and how to come in contact with super-realized souls, who can guide an aspirant towards the ultimate goal? Possessing thirst for the real life, having *bhakti* and *shradha* and to desist from association with actions and objects, that are considered impure and immoral, are such as deserve guidance and blessings from the super souls.

This is automatic. Such super souls are looking for devout, pure aspirants who need to be guided to higher life. They are as much keen to find such devotees, as devotees themselves are keen and earnest to find and get in touch with super souls.

One must, therefore, persevere to develop pure faculties, truthfulness and restraint. One must be full of affection and love, but not attachment and one must decide and clearly see the aim and mission of one's life that will lead to the supreme goal of life.



# Character is the basis of true education

19 Sept 1955

**A** youngman, facing the un-chartered seas of life, should be like a warrior. A warrior, is he who wages war for high virtues and lofty ideals; for sublime wisdom and aspirations. Such a warrior cannot be ease-loving, comfort-seeking and given to lethargy and stagnation. Such a youngman has to be properly educated.

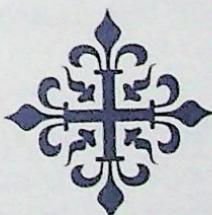
What is education and who is educated? The three pre-requisites of education are training, discipline and knowledge. It is such education that brings forth feelings of sympathy, mercy and kindness, not only for one's own, but for all; and a determination to achieve one's goal. Such education creates in one the desire to unfold one's self and become a complete man. It brings out the perfection in man, that is already within him.

It is training of the whole personality, i.e. body, mind and soul. It is character building. Character is the basis and the final outcome of true education.

In an educated person, there must be faith or shradha in one's own self, in the

Divine within and in the all pervading, all permeating, cause of all causes, Omnipresent Divinity.

Such faith, never stumbles or shakes despite a thousand obstacles, oppositions, mishaps or failures; and does not get weakened, by those who are immoral, unholy and against the Divine principles. Nothing is impossible for such a man. Backed by such a faith, a man can show death-defying courage, vigour, strength and superhuman endeavour and indomitable will. Such a person lives a balanced life and never stumbles or submits to any particular interest or feeling that conflicts with higher laws.



## The 'Aim' and the 'Path'

6th. October, 1955

**N** in this vast universe, for everything there is a cause. Behind all the billions of universes, there is the creator, destroyer, master, governor, and maintainer, preserver, which is infinite power, infinite consciousness, infinite bliss, and infinite existence. All creation comes out of Him, systematically, develops and progresses, but the sub-stratum of all this creation is *Sat-Chit-Anand* : the *Mahashakti* – one unique cause, of all causes and effects. A seed produces a tree and the tree produces seeds. A ripple forms in water but merges in water again.

This is the universal law, which cannot be understood by a normal mind. Every cause has a predetermined effect, and every effect becomes a predetermined cause. But, every effect is a result of an infinite number of causes, that is beyond the capacity of a normal mind to comprehend. Only the divine being sees it all, not only the causes, but also the effects, in a time frame that in itself is 'Timeless'. But, since life is the cause of causes and their effects, the ultimate object is to unfold the Divine unity,

bliss and existence of all creation and unfold in one's own 'self', the sub-stratum of Sat-Chit-Anand.

This is the supreme fruit for which we live through and live for. Our 'antaratma' creates craving in us, without our knowledge, for reaching the Highest Divinity, to achieve which, we go through various janamas in various forms, to return to the Ultimate Source, from which we came.

In the intermediate stages, the little fruits of action, seemingly agreeable or disagreeable, pleasing or unpleasant, are not the underling objectives of our aim. But in general, people get attached to these agreeable and disagreeable fruits and revolve incessantly in the cycle of long, long, long series of births and deaths and become prisoners of their *karmas*.

But if one craves, only for the highest fruit of Divinity, which is the underling purpose of creation, there remains no karma to pursue, nothing to act, nothing to respond to.. Then such an aspirant merges into Divinity. No one can avoid this destination. The motion of life never ceases until this aim is achieved. Consciously or unconsciously each and every one is tending towards that Divinity. Don't ever measure this period of pursuit by accepted norms of time. This is a pursuit where time is 'Time-less'. This is a mystery, that normal minds

do not understand or comprehend.

The only difference is, that if an individual consciously seeks the Ultimate Goal, the life of such a person becomes smooth, easy, peaceful and full of contentment and indifferent to the agreeables and the disagreeables, pleasant or the unpleasant.

If a man is conscious only of the superficial vicissitudes of life, unmindful of the ultimate aim and purpose of life, then his life becomes an endless struggle, horrible, pathetic, painful, tiresome and full of complexities and whirlpools, birth after birth.

Ultimately, however, each one has to be conscious of his ultimate object and aim and direct all his endeavour in his soul, mind and body to achieve it. The only difference being, one achieving it in peace and the other, through travails and trials, life after life.

Life is destined towards the highest aim for the most perfect fruit and for divinity, which is real existence. A true aspirant neither becomes attached and confined to any object or persons pleasing (of course temporarily) nor does he become disgusted and hateful to any object or any person that appears displeasing or disagreeable.

A real aspirant lives for the highest ideal and becomes an embodiment of higher

ideas and faith in the Divine. All his relationships, associates and relations must conform to the ideal he is living for, and he cannot compromise his morals, character, ideal, purity, and perfection for anything, in this world. One finds that in the world around us, there are souls and living objects that always stand behind such a dedicated aspirant with a helping hand and ever-ready to volunteer help, for his real good. Such an aspirant should never feel lonely or lost.

Gurushakti is always dedicated to such an aspirant. Divine power and the whole Cosmos stands behind and around such an aspirant, to ensure that his moral and spiritual values stand firm and strong, within his heart and soul, amidst all the hardships and difficulties, that such an aspirant may face, in the worldly sense. In the phenomenal world, it does not matter what difficulty or hardship or poverty of resources such an aspirant faces. What matters is how he keeps aloft, untouched and pure the aim of his life, to which he is dedicated. Divine force is his very own and behind him to ensure stability, depth, dedication and uncompromising purity, of such an aspirant. He has to go through hardships, which will either break him or make him stronger in his resolve to adhere to the path of piety, purity and real spiritual aspiration. Divinity, as a mother, is always with him, concerned about him with all Her motherly love.

There is a supreme power ever watching such an aspirant. He knows which aspirant requires what process. His process is a mystery. Man confined in the phenomenal world cannot comprehend it. So, the only way left to the aspirant is to surrender to His will. Egoistically, one should never attempt to progress. An aspirant has to be indifferent to pleasure and pain, success and failure, praise or censure.

It is very difficult indeed. Therefore, to surrender, and surrender to the higher forces and law and to higher morals and principals, is the only way. If one surrenders mentally, physically and intellectually, then the Divine Shakti reveals to her devout child the light of pure bliss and knowledge, pure life, pure concepts, pure character and pure awareness of where the aspirant stands in the Divine Existence. She is always there to protect such an aspirant. Blessed is such an aspirant!



## Sharnagati

15 April 1956

**M**an's ultimate perfection and achievement is perfect "Sharangati". But this is very difficult to achieve, because a man, in the phenomenal world is influenced and is a prisoner of five 'kaleshas'. These five are *Avidya, Asimita, Raga, Dvesha and Abhiniberha*. We need not go deep into their origin and purpose, but let us understand a little, and their literal meaning.

- **Avidya** – in a sense is ignorance – ignorance of reality, 'Truth, Consciousness Divine, i.e., "Lord" or "Self": A mysterious force, It is ye, nay, both or even neither..
- **Asimita** – in a sense – is egoistical raga – attraction, a feeling of attraction of any pleasing – gross or subtle within or without, for one's own, self.
- **Dvesha** – is the reverse of Raga – repulsion – avarice, feeling of repulsion towards anything disagreeable, gross or subtle, whether within or without.
- **Abhiniberha** i.e. fear of death – clinging to life, the impulse within, that pushes one to act and cling to life.

All these can be, in simple words,

described as instincts. Divinity, the Truth Consciousness, benevolent Lord, is free from all these.

Man is captive of *Avidya* and the last four. The misery or *Kalesha* is ignorance of Truth, which is the basis of Samskara. But, experience guided by reality and pure reason, tend to insulate him from the five tendencies and induce him to commune with the Lord, which is his own 'self', his beloved, which is all love.

It is possible that due to experience in this life or previous samskaras, in earlier lives, a man is drawn towards an attitude of self-surrender and submission and becomes immune to the five *kaleshas*, mentioned above, but inspite of that, he has to be cent-per-cent keen, chaste, careful, vigilant and persevering, to overcome any influence by the negative forces from within or without.

He must follow and adopt, a set of principles, morals, higher dictates and laws for maintaining that state of self-surrender and perfect submission and *sharnagati*. If he has the slightest touch of ego, or of his own person or personal interest, then the five *kaleshas* at-once enter into his being and draw him away from his divine purpose, the divine being and his attitude of absolute *sharnagati*.

The five *kaleshas* are the arrows of all-

powerful-Maya and a pure *Bhakta* becomes a mere creature without *vivek*, right knowledge of the source of *vasanas*, their relations with the stimuli that come from within his self and the outer world, and become the cause of his good or bad actions. Any sensations or action, due to their influence is undivine, even if they appear to be good according to normal intellect.

The easiest and the simplest way for real aspirants to be guarded against the effect of these five *kaleshas* is to keep one's self fully perservient and within the dictates that lead to freedom from these *kaleshas* and keep one's ideal, aim and aspiration untouched by the negative influences, that appear reasonable from the worldly point of view, but are not spiritually correct and cannot be justified by pure reason.

A *Gnani* who is perfect and has been able to free himself from ignorance of the Divine, from ego, feelings of attachment,repulsion and clinging to life; because he himself has evolved into a state of life, that is pure consciousness, Truth and Divine; becomes one with the Supreme Self. He has no ego. His actions are no actions. To the ignorant, he has a body, but to his self, he has none. He has no 'me and mine'.He is a *jivanmukta* and is at a stage in perfect state of *sharnagati*. To him the Lord is always Bliss and because he has surrendered everything – his ego, self, feeling, action to the Lord, he is always in a state of absolute Bliss.

But, to reach that stage one has to watch, as a money changer discards the counterfeit and accepts only the genuine coins. One has to be vigilant and watch every action, every thought, every response, conscious or subconscious, to the outer stimuli; and be careful and persevering, under all circumstances, to protect and to ensure the purity of his feelings, expressions and actions.

Our cognition, emotion, action gross and subtle, caused or induced must be in perfect harmony. No stimuli at any event or time, should create any disharmony. To such a believer, even the severest tragedy, because it comes from the most beloved Lord and, therefore is no tragedy but a benediction. Sorrow, pain or mourning do not exist in his world. The beloved Lord, who is all love and joy, can never be a cause of terror or tragedy.

**Karma** is another name of **Avidya**. One must aim higher and never bother about the fruit, blissful or resulting in terror. Love the higher being, who is beyond **Avidya** and dedicate to Him with a devout heart. Real **karma** is that with which you will be able to see His look, will be able to commune with Him and associate with Him.

Such **Karma** will help man easily to be freed from the influences of the five **kaleshas** and such a person will become a perfect lover and a **sharnagati**, in thought, word and deed.

Truthfulness creates bhakhti, devotion and *prema*. This life is a great opportunity and real *sharnagati* is the highest aim. Let everything be felt, thought and acted, as our offering to the Lord.



## Blessings of Gurushakti flow automatically to a pure devotee

15th. August, 1959

**O**ne should be careful and prompt with regard to essentials needed for one's health and spirit. A man's character, restraint, development, disciplined movements and actions can be known only when one is given full independence, in all one's actions, under all circumstances. A sincere sensible man, viewing his real good, can deal with problems and respond to external situations without compromising his principles. In each and every moment one has the opportunity to test and examine one's self and one's reactions in line with one's unshakable commitment to one's aim and goal in life.

If one can prove one's self to be a right thinker, restrained, principled, disciplined and contended, one would automatically receive the blessings of Guru Shakti, who will mysteriously transfer to an aspirant power, knowledge and bliss. I pray for your success as a mother does for her child. If you remain all well in health, mind, spirit and action, that would automatically be soothing for my health. This you should believe.

Shri Thakur used to say “Be a Bhakta, but don’t be foolish or behave cowardly”. A true Bhakta never acts foolishly and never behaves like a coward.

May Shri Thakur always, always bless you!



## Blessing and power of Guru-Shakti

7th. October, 1959

**T**he child is nothing but the Guru Shakti embodied. The process is this that a child, the affectionate one, is to first solely merge in the bright effulgence of Shri Gurushakti, which ultimately reveals itself as the existence, force, bliss, consciousness — as the Mother, who is supremely divine. To be merged with that aspect of the mother divine,

*Paramahamsarupani*, the child should possess unflinching faith and surrender to her, with undaunted courage. He should possess the death-defying spirit, be calm and serene, firm and sound, like the mountain, under the brilliance of Shri Gurushakti's lotus feet.

The Mother Supreme, the ultimate blissful object and aim of all creation, craves for Her earnest children to merge with Her. Likewise there is an innate and inherent craving and a bursting thirst amongst Her children, whether they know it or not, to be one with the Supreme Existence and Eternal Bliss. Because of our limitations, we cannot directly raise ourselves to the level of Her purity to be one with Her. Therefore as a result of her benevolence, mercy and affection

and unchanging supreme will and love, She has taken the form of Shree Shree Thakur as the Guru and the saviour of us all to take us from the mire and darkness of egoism and desire for *Kamini* and *Kanchan*, to Her hallowed and Supreme Presence, for eternal communion.

Therefore, in each and every breath try to realize the sweet and lovely, guiding and guarding, affectionate and channelising power of the Lord, Shri Ramakrishna; and dedicate yourself, your intellect, mind and your heart to Shri Thakur. Until one dedicates thus, one cannot understand or comprehend what Gurushakti is and how pure, serene, blissful and loving She is towards a dedicated soul.

Until this is done there is every chance for disturbance and imbalance by the onslaught by the sense organs and baseless, shelterless and vacuum like ego.

Therefore, whatever stands between you and your Lord, your *Gurushakti*'s grace, mercy and benevolence, destroy it without the least of hesitation.

This is how life's struggle begins but culminates in becoming a fully dedicated child to be embraced by the Gurushakti.

He is always waiting to receive such a child, as the mother clasps her child to her breast - a child who has shunned the transitoriness of this world and comes to

Him running to rejuvenate his life with His divine presence and touch.

*Satya-Pratishtha* is required first. His presence and existence as the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient, from an atom to Brahma, acknowledged and established as unshakable faith and *Dhayana* leads to *Satya-Pratishtha*. When this faith is complete one goes beyond the mortal physical plane and becomes well established in *Pran-Pratishtha*, which is '*Premarupa*' – a state of love itself, as a first glimpse of Shree Guru's presence in each and all.

A chaste and earnest seeker, undaunted and uninfluenced can become, with sincere effort, a moralist and earn the grace of Guru and blossom into a sweet state of spiritual realization. Without Guru's blissful and benign touch, spirituality cannot be achieved. Morality sustains a perpetual and eternal state of spirituality, which has been earned by the sweet touch of Shri Guru Thakur and makes the pure, dedicated and earnest devotee, a spiritual lion to fulfil His will in this mortal plane of human life.



## Moral Values in the conduct of personal and public life

17th. May, 1960

**R**egarding law and order, I never depend on sense perceived knowledge to know facts. While, these may be helpful, but to find the underlying truth my mind acts quite differently. It is horrible to witness what is happening around. Socially, we are in the jaws of destruction. Law and order can be expected from sincere, benevolent or from those who are morally developed. Right thinking, right understanding, right actions reveal the pure, independent mind. Such mind has to be guided by higher principles in a methodical manner for some ideal, which has to be higher than the mundane, short sighted objectives. One has not to forget real values and objectives of beings.

*(Swamiji laid greatest stress on moral values, particularly in people who had taken on themselves to lead and guide other people in any activity. Politicians without moral values and without commitment to higher ideals would, he always said, hurt those who followed them or whose destinies they controlled).*



## Divine Law is inviolable

3rd. June, 1960

**S**o many things happen in the world around. People react to these situations according to their limited knowledge, understanding and study of the situation. Yesterday some one came and talked about the massacre and revolution in Tibet. As I am, I look at changes in situation from a deeper angle. We see the all governing, all pervading, all controlling, destroying and maintaining power; which is fully conscious, independent and ruling the phenomenal world within the broad and supreme ideal & the Divine law. What others see, are at the phenomenal level, but are like automatons or machines, under the control of supreme power. Even men of high intellect and knowledge are also like automatons in the hands of supreme power.

One must have full faith in this reality behind all phenomenal happenings, and then attempt, if possible, to judge and understand these happenings. It is then that one can have real glimpse of each and every event in the world.



## On brutal happenings in Assam

26th. July, 1960

**W**e have heard about the brutal happenings in Assam. On Saturday last (Dr) Karan Singh and his consort came here and spent 2/3 hours with us, talking about various subjects. We also touched the subject of present and future of India, if the present policy of the Government continues. As we see it, our present leaders have very little administrative experience. They are devoid of any particular ideal with which one can rule and handle the destiny of this country and its people. Pushed into power by majority vote of people, who are under-developed and dominated by whims, selfishness and sentiments and possessing false conception of equality, although they themselves are the creators of divisions and conflicts; these people and so called leaders, are not handling situations as they should be. However, while a very sensible person can understand what is happening in the country and in our society, he cannot under present situation do much to modify it. It is very sad and I shudder to think of what can happen in the future.

*Looking back at what has happened since, considering the role, black money is playing in our election process, wide-spread corruption amongst people in power, in public, private and in our commercial life; one cannot help to agree with Swamijee Maharaj when in 1960, he said "I shudder to think what can happen in future."*

*(Having shared this with Dr. Karan Singh, who is one of the most enlightened, erudite, very well grounded in the lofty Indian values and certainly one of the tallest Indians, this small statement had foreboding of a gruesome future.)*



## Seek Divine help with purity to know the self

8th. August, 1961

**W**hardly any one these days knows what is life and its secrets, but to those who see it in essence and observe it, become aware of a motion unfolding itself continuously amidst its changing external nature. Only the wise men, who are calm, can see the purpose for which it is continuously in motion and the mystery behind it. It is indeed good to be inspired to unfold the inherent reality underlying it, but such inspiration must be deep rooted and also well guarded, because the surface influences of this motion itself makes it impossible for any man to fathom it, if he lacks the spirit of pure consciousness and his aspiration is not deep rooted to unfold its mystery and to understand its reality and ultimate aim.

Even for a person whose aspiration is deep rooted, pitfalls are many before final attainment. Just as a moving Engine cannot be stopped by physical force, but can be stopped if the driver can be persuaded to do so.

So the Supreme Guru Shakti, who is as

affectionate as the mother and who is the prime-mover of all changes and movements can, if the aspirant can establish contact with that Supreme power, unfold the mysteries and secrets of life.

That Guru Shakti can be contacted by any one with purity and simplicity with spirit of surrender and through a way of life that is moral and principled in its method and approach.

Diamonds lose their brilliance under the cover of dust and dirt. So the human soul is inherently brilliant but the dust and dirt of impurity has to be removed. It is only a cover and not a part of the diamond and can be removed easily by an earnest soul through aspiration and prayer.

One should pray to Shri Thakur, who is the most affectionate helper. He is the means to the end, the guide and the spirit to solve everything in life and reveal in the aspirant the real divine life, the self, the mystery and the divine secret. Like the affectionate mother, he is waiting.



## Advice to a Devotee

4th. October 1961

**T**It appears you are wanting to have a change during puja holidays. If you agree, I may suggest you to go Kamarpukur and arrange separate room from the mission. Take your own servant to cook your meals as the ashram food may not suit your sensitive system. After finishing your morning bodily needs, you can go to sit in the verandah in front of Shri Thakur's hut. Perform Thakur's *nam jappa* with meditation, like a devout, surrendered, affectionate child of His. After some time come to your place, take light breakfast and again go there and do *jappa* upto mid-day meal time i.e upto 12 noon. After meal have rest for some time and then think of Him with a prayerful, devout heart and mind, chanting his name or you can read His life or gospel upto 3 p.m. Again go to the verandah, sit there and perform His *nam jappa* in the same way as in the morning and utilize the time till night meal doing *jappa*. Make time, in between for some tea. At night after meals, be in a contemplative mood till sleep embraces you.

Keep yourself reserved from any other talk with any body. Have *sankalpa* to per-

form one lac.or more *jappa*, with Shri Thakur's sweet, lovely and divine from within and without you.

Shri Thakur also used to say to His devotees to pass some time in this way away from the complexities of the external world.



## Inner self and the outer world

19th. October, 1961

**E**nvironmental constraints, influences and ways of life, in the development of a *Sadhak* are not critical. What is most important are the inner tendencies and samskars that react and respond to external stimuli and the objective world. So one must constantly be aware of the inner self and its reaction to the outer world. Experiences gathered from the world around at different times and circumstances are indeed important, but inner person is feeling consciousness, the purity of which must not only be preserved but also fully manifested to let it act. Desirelessness helps to maintain the purity. So whatever the influences of environment, irrespective of the age we live in, what matters is the impositions and limitations of one's desires, that react with the outer objective world. Our greatest shield and shelter, under all the situations is selfless devotion and love for the *Ishta* and the *Gurushakti*, which reveals and definitely uncovers the real person. Love's one aspect is to unify with the beloved *Ishta* and *Gurushakti*. This means self negation. Self negation leads to freedom from projections and to inspirations, unconditioned by the outer

world and selfish desires. Love for Gurushakti means to be like him and to belong to him. In pure love there is no place for personal ego.



## Repent to receive

27th. March, 1962

**Y**our much repentful expressions and approach make me overpowered and a current of blessings and affection flows in a shower towards you and I really adore you to be the worthy child of my beloved Lord Shri Thakur who is all love and pranas. He is within you and your *prana*. Believe and think of Him. I request you to think and feel that he is looking at you, in each and every step you take in your daily routine, most innocently and lovingly with his beautiful serene and charming face. He is so benevolent and *pranamaya*. A sincere Sadhaka should never feel alone. It is a blessed state which should be filled with the sumaran of one's Ishta. Guru-Shakti in the form of Shri Thakur is always with you. One has to be watchful of adverse stimuli from outside. Even inner desires destabilise the mind. But when the heart is filled with sincere affection for Shri Thakur, he is always with you in the form of *Bishudha prana* and transforming your inner being to be in harmony with Him. You should feel his compassion and do your best for him. He is your constant friend, guide, teacher and mother.



## The power of sincere love

11th. May, 1962

॥ request you that whenever you think of me, even for a moment, think of your self as a child to me, and me as an affectionate mother. Behave as a child with me - just like a true, sincere child, where there is no bargaining. Forget you are an engineer when you are dealing with me. In sincere affection, love and relationship, ideal is the guiding shield and power. Subtle opposite vibration should not affect our feelings of affection and love. May Shri Thakur bestow and develop in you such feeling of pure love and affection. When such channels of sincere love are established, Guru Shakti automatically becomes active and transfers and transforms a sincere shishya into his own image.



A devotee of Shri Thakur should  
never feel alone

13th. June, 1962

**A**gain, I tell you, you are not alone, you may or may not understand to whom you are most near and dear and to whom you are divinely connected and related; the soul or souls that are always abiding in you with each and every action of yours. You can have no point to doubt in this. Any one in whose bosom the sincerity of the most beautiful, lovely, affectionate force of Shri Thakur dwells, how can he think himself to be alone. He is your best companion, your everything whose unbounded grace and blessings are always with you for your alround satisfaction and peace. He is more than a mother.



## Morality the basis of spiritual life

13th. July, 1962

**O**ne should never falter in one's morals or principles, particularly when one can differentiate between real and unreal. To such a one, Shri Thakur is always a supreme guiding force. One should think of Him, feel Him to be within and pray to Him. He is the source of unbounded affection and grace to make the life of a devout, happy and successful and lead him on the road to spiritual well being.

Feelings of renunciation and contentment are indeed the foundation of spiritual growth. But severe austerities and penance are not for those who develop a relation of love for Shri Thakur. To such a devotee everything will come and get manifested provided he is not in anyway cause of insult to the mother's forms. To such a person, the grace of Guru will always help to build him up as a super soul, brilliant and worthy of worship.



# A sad commentary on Indian leaders

5th. December, 1962

**W**e hear many things about Indo-Chinese and Indo-Pakistan affairs. I am afraid, the Indian leaders may endanger the people of India and India, as a result of their short sighted, ignorant and corrupt policies, which have become a part of the present day, diplomatic world. I am afraid that India will have to face a critical time and if the leaders prove bigoted, India will have to suffer in the extreme. India should not be betrayed by its own leaders.



## The supremacy of Motherly love

23rd. August, 1963

**R**elationship of a mother towards her child is unique. Whereas a child grows into a boy, a youngman and then into a grown up man and his attitude towards his mother changes with growing years, but the love of the mother towards her son, whatever his age, remains unchanged and unaffected by passing years. Her motherliness remains unaffected. On the one side, we see experience, intellect and changing circumstances having their impact on the mental attitudes and emotional feelings of the son, on the other such changes in body, intellect or mind do not have any change at all on the mother or her motherliness towards her child. Mother has an unchanging, tender, benevolent, beautiful and almost divine sweetness of heart towards her child. It is such love, pervading in nature that makes life continue in this world.

If the intellectual development of human beings could be enriched, as it were, with motherly love, then this world would be quite different.



## A real devotee

6th. July, 1964

**G**uru Shakti is like the mother to see a shishya perfect, happy, peaceful and an attained one. The more a person remains unaffected by the changing phases of the phenomenal world, the more advanced is the unfoldment of his inner self. It is in the daily struggle of active life that a true karma yogi gets a measure of his stamina, strength, effort, of his eagerness, of his perseverance, and of his aspiration towards his beloved lord – the *Ishta*.

Having easy access to the means and to the objects of sense enjoyment, if a true aspirant, possessing earnestness and dedication to the supreme lord and to his ideal, remains unmoved and firm like a mountain, aided by his steadfastness and dedication, he is a real devotee. Such a man is higher than so called gods and is really worthy of worship by angles and gods themselves. Such a person is a real saint and a devotee.

This is the only real test of an aspirant when he achieves such a state, he is entitled to be within the category of earnest devotee of the Lord.

A true devotee should not stagnate and

should try to know his own self, after which he can see the futility of the mundane objects of the world, the attraction of which fall like autumn leaves. Guru Shakti lulls such a devotee in His lap.



# Individual and the Infinite Existence

28th. August, 1964

**I**t is natural that a man being a rational and intellectual entity draws conclusions in line with his intellectual development, within the bounds of his inner limitations and other compulsions and commitments. It is good to be guided by such conclusions and mould one's personality. But as a unit in a complete creation, which is infinite in its variety and beyond human comprehension, one cannot be blind to the existence of a supreme will and power, which is omnipresent and omnipotent.

One must possess radiant faith in the supreme existence and whole heartedly surrender, submit and dedicate to Him, knowing Him as the source of all that exists in life or in death which are two active facets of creation, as one sees it.

All that exists is only His manifestation and one must become aware of ones place in His manifestation and realize that all is HE or SHE the Supreme Mother, the all loving Shri Guru Shakti.

To such a person, fear, weakness, or anything which deludes or limits cannot or does not exist.

Shri Thakur used to say "The son who catches hold of his father's arm has chances of a fall, but the child who is held by his father like a little baby in his lap can never slip or fall." How beautiful it is!

There are two types of aspirants – one is the type who first establish an intellectual understanding but without having gone through the basic preparation, they waste a lot of time in the complexities of the existence itself.

There is the other, a few fortunate ones, who only believe that He exists and that He is their only One and therefore, to see Him, to touch Him, to speak to Him, to live with and in Him, is their only aim and aspiration of life. Such souls live in the faith that except Him, life does not exist and cannot exist and that life can have no existence except HE.

The Lord Himself with the attributes reveals Himself. To such a soul, nothing remains hidden and whatever such a devotee realizes, does or speaks, is universally true and divine.

Experiences and intellectual responses to the world around and the properties within should all be laid at the feet of the Lord.

When that is done, Shri Thakur catches one and holds one, as a little child and such a devotee, being guided and goaded by Him,

responds to His will like a machine. Blessed be such a devotee and may he see and feel the Supreme Mother, Gurushakti and the beloved Ishta Devi in everything.

One must go in the all pervading company of the Ishta and with Her grace, everything which is divine will be revealed to such a devotee.



## Advice to a young man

3rd. September, 1966

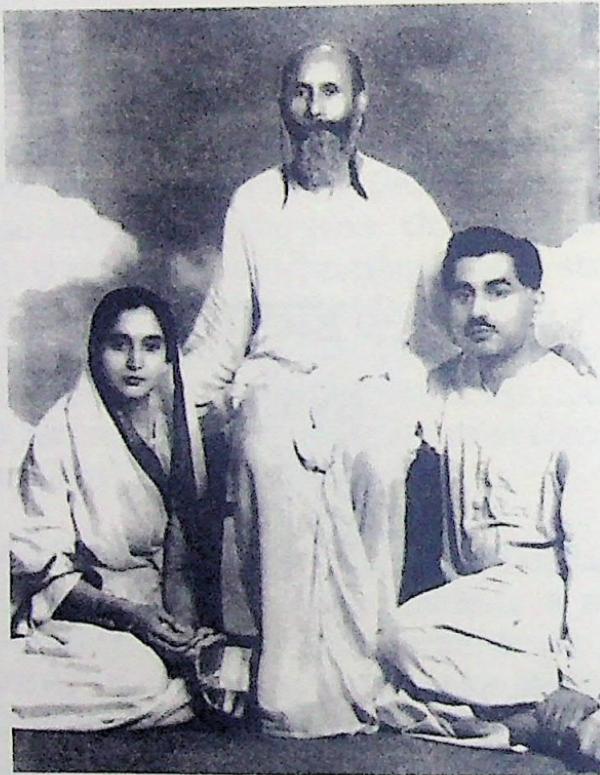
**O**ne should stand firmly and with determination to brighten one's future. There should be nothing in one's way for dejection. Depression has no place and no justification. One should believe that man possesses immeasurable strength and powers within. Glorious future stands ahead of a man. He should only have the right avenue to work. There is no doubt that one has to face difficulties but overcome them smilingly and firmly.

Struggles, troubles, pains, difficulties are the real eye openers and guide to a man possessing sincerity and some times subjects persons to severe tests to make them strong and powerful. One should understand this secret well and should never be depressed, but on the other hand should be happy and merrily fulfill one's mission in life.



ॐ हृषरे !





Sri Manmohan Dhar and Smt Mohini Dhar  
at the feet of Swami Ashokanandaji

## About the Author

**M**anmohan Dhar, from his childhood, was fondled by Kashmir's beauty, love of uncles in a joint family who were, locally known for their robust outlook, their wit and humour and their readiness to fight for the weak. He grew in an atmosphere of love and care by neighbors, in an environment where there were no dividing lines between Hindus and Muslims. It is not surprising, therefore, that he can even now, at the age of eighty one, recite kashmiri poetry and folk songs in the typical Kashmiri tunes, which he in younger years sang in choruses, in the programs presented by London Majlis in the U.K. and at the International Rural Youth Conference, held in Vienna in December 1954, when he was asked to lead a cultural delegation, on behalf of India, to the Conference, by the London Majlis. He relates an unbelievable story, when on the coronation day Pt. Nehru, sitting in his Rolls Royce with Indira Gandhi sitting on his right, at the Knightsbridge crossing, shouted, spontaneously, at Dhar, who was walking back from the Hyde Park after the conclusion of the coronation procession; and told him (Manmohan) that Indira was telling him that he sang very well and that he would want him (Manmohan) to sing for him (Pt. Nehru). Of course, that day never came but this was an affirmation of Mr. Dhar's lilting voice, which Indiraji and many others had liked.

His love for music grew from his childhood, nourished largely by his Uncle, Pt. Vidh Lal Dhar, who set up a theater: 'Kashmir Theatrical Co.' in Srinagar, J&K state. Most of the musicians who visited Kashmir, during those days used to visit their house and there were music

sessions held in their honour, where they would themselves sing.

At the age of thirteen he was greatly attracted by the life and sayings of Jesus Christ, His Sermon on the Mount. Later, he was given a small book-let written by J. Krishnamurti. Slow but subconscious accretion of influence of these writings drew him to the beauty of nature in Kashmir. Mountains, lakes, the southern range of snow-covered peaks, the fragmented clouds catching the morning rays of the rising sun and their reflecting colours of various hues would make him burst into tears of a strange kinship with nature. This culminated into an inexplicable passion when he saw a young saint, naked save his loin cloth, silent but with an aura of other worldliness and with a gaze that looked beyond the horizon. His smile was hypnotic and it appeared to him that he had reached unreachable heights of excellence. Manmohan was attracted to him and wanted to be like him. So he ran nearly twenty miles and shed his clothes and other belongings. For nearly four days he lived like a naked sadhu. He was, however, located and at the beckoning of the young sanyasin, himself, he returned to the normal world.

Back to normal life, he became an engineer and was married to a wonderful young lady who was a very beautiful person to look at and even more so, in heart and soul. As an engineer, he was conscientious, able, dedicated and honest to a fault. He went to the Imperial College of science and technology, London, where he completed his post graduate studies in structural engineering and also developed an abiding relationship with Shri Krishna Menon. His engineering career in India reached fair heights of excellence and he made a mark in management, in standardisation, in exports and in various fields of structural engineering. Manmohan

Dhar, rose to be the first Indian Chief Engineer, the first Indian General Manager and then the first Indian Managing Director of M/s. BRAITHWAITE & CO. ( I ) Ltd., Calcutta, employing about 7000 employees and one of the finest Structural and Mechanical engineering companies this side of SUEZ, engaged in and responsible for design, fabrication, supply and erection of steel bridges, including the old Howrah Bridge and the recently constructed Hoogly bridge, till then the third of its type in World He was responsible for putting India on the wagon map of the World, against stiff competition from Belgium and Japan, when he was successful in securing a prestigious order from South Korea for eight wheeler tank Wagons, designed by him, in 1967, almost from the hip-pocket of Japanese. The inauguration of the first shipment was done by Shri Morarji Desai. He had joined the company as a senior design engineer in November 1955 and left the company in early 1973, to join as Managing Director of KAMANI ENGINEERIG CORPORATION ( I ) Ltd.Bombay. The name of the company was latter changed to K.E.C. International, Bombay, the second largest company in the world, in design, manufacture, testing and erection of transmission Towers He was even asked by Pandit Nehru and Shri T.T. Krishnamachar to join as a consultant in the Ministry of Steel in 1957 which Manmohan Dhar declined because of his commitment to M/s Braithwaite & Co. He never ever compromised his conscience.

He also acted as a director of B.B.J. Construction Company and Bagirathi Construction Company. The latter was responsible for making a bid for the design, fabrication, construction and erection of the new Hoogly bridge, the concept and proposal of which was initiated by Manmohan Dhar.

**He has acted, to name only a few,**

- As advisor, to N. C. A. E. R. for making proposals for steel economy, required by Pt. Nehru.
- As chairman, of International Standardisation Programs for rolled steel products, under the aegis of ISO of United Nations, the meetings of which were attended by senior representatives of all steel producing countries including U.S.A., U.K., Canada, Australia, Russia, Japan and all East and West European countries, India, Sweden etc. Meetings were held in India, Germany, Sweden and U.S.A.
- As chairman of a number of Industrial Divisions of All India Engineering Association (AIEI)
- As a member of working groups of Planning Commission.
- As a member of official Indian delegation to Indo-British conference in London, and to Indo-US conference in Houston U.S.A., both on third country exports. In the latter he was asked to act as chairman of the major group on energy, which was attended by over two hundred premier energy companies from U.S.A. and India, with a co-chairman provided by the U.S.A government.

His greatest reward has been his relationship with people. It became for him an aid to unfoldment of his inner 'self' in which the basic ingredients have been love, mutual self respect and joy. He believes in worshiping God with Joy. His poems are outpourings of his inner personality and he believes in propagating joy through his relationship with people.

Lastly, to conclude in his own words-

*"There is a lot more and more interesting achieve*

ments and incidents in my life but it will border on immodesty if I have to talk about them now. In short, I have enjoyed life all the way. To say that at the age of 81 is what makes me thank God, who helped me in not compromising my conscience and never to be mean or take advantages."

ॐ गुरु ।



# Errata

The following are corrections for typographical errors in this book.

<i>Page</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
7, line10	ia	is
11, line	...Achchabal Mogul gardens and acquired a most beautiful mud hut....	...Achchabal Mogul gardens and acquired. A most beautiful mud hut...
24, line1	itin	it in
25, line3	dynamicgiving	dynamic giving
28, line12	'vrittish'	'vrittis'
33, line 14, 21	underling	underlying
40, line 24	frui	fruit
54, line 2	divine from	divine form
58, line 1	thinkof	think of
63, line 20	angles	angeles
65, line 8	complete creation	complex creation







**K**ashmir's geography and place in the cultural mosaic of India, the relevance of the Indian values in the survival of the human race, the emergence of religious fanaticism, in pushing the world civilisations to rid the world, by their joint will, of the conflict slammed on humanity in the name of God, the clarion call of swami Vivekananda on the 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1893 at the parliament of religions held in Chicago USA, all these, lead us to see a Divine Hand in the shape of things to come.

Excerpts from some of Swami Ashokananda ji's letters written to Manmohan Dhar between 1955 to 1966, are presented for the benefit of humanity to establish a sense of direction, a sense of divine purpose of creation itself, torn as it is, between the ephemeral and sensuous pursuits of present day living...

...the construction of his sentences and the steadiness of his hand writing, even in a twelve page letter; hits one as an overwhelming evidence of a super-mind: steady, clear and having his vision, in a time-frame that is 'timeless'

The dream of Swami Vivekananda, who was an integral part of the combined personalities of Shri Ramakrishna and Ma Sharda, that vibrated through every nerve and heart beat of our Swami Ashokananda ji Maharaj and in whose name he established the Ashram- SHRI RAMAKRISHNA MAHASAMELAN ASHRAM in Nagadandi Kashmir, which grew mysteriously enough, where the prophetic words and the following dream of Swami Vivekananda blossomed into reality.

*"We want to lead mankind to the place where there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran, yet this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran.*

*"Mankind ought to be taught that religions are but the varied expressions of THE RELIGION, which is Oneness, so that each may choose the path that suits him best."*

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**INDIGO**